

The Hospital has been faced with a health professional shortage requiring the payment for caregiver services through overtime and use of temporary agencies at a level much greater than anticipated. (Even when staff becomes available, we have been forced to pay higher hourly rates to attract health professionals to the Carbondale area.)

This past spring, the Hospital's provider of professional and general liability insurance (PHICO) become insolvent requiring the use

of expensive alternatives and financial resources that were not planned until a solution could be formulated with other Pennsylvania hospitals in a like situation.

Capital expenditures and replacement of medical equipment in the current fiscal year will need to be reprioritized until relief from unreimbursed costs can be resolved.

Thank you again for your interest in our Hospital and in the Northeast region of Pennsylvania. We are prepared to participate

in any way in hearings with your Committee to resolve this crises.

Respectfully yours,

THOMAS L. HERON,
Chief Financial Officer.

TYLER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL,
Tunkhannock, PA, July 8, 2002.

Below please find a history of our hospital's reimbursement rate under Medicare's prospective payment system:

| | Labor component | Wage index | Adjusted labor | Non-labor component | Actual base rate | Increase (percent) | Consumer price index (percent) |
|------|-----------------|------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1998 | \$2,732.26 | 0.8539 | \$2,333.08 | \$1,110.58 | \$3,443.66 | | |
| 1999 | 2,739.36 | 0.8683 | 2,378.59 | 1,113.47 | 3,492.06 | 1.41 | 1.70 |
| 2000 | 2,764.70 | 0.8524 | 2,356.63 | 1,123.76 | 3,480.39 | -0.33 | 1.60 |
| 2001 | 2,818.85 | 0.8578 | 2,418.01 | 1,145.78 | 3,563.79 | 2.40 | 2.70 |
| 2002 | 2,908.65 | 0.8683 | 2,525.58 | 1,182.27 | 3,707.85 | 4.04 | 3.40 |

As you can see, in three of the last four years, our increase in payment has fallen short of the increase in the consumer price index. In 2000, our base payment rate actually decreased because of a reduction in the wage index.

With increases in our payments that do not surpass the rising cost of healthcare, the hospital is put in a position where, in order to staff the lone hospital within a 45-mile radius, it must tap into its own cash reserves that were earmarked for improved capital equipment.

It's imperative that the wage index be increased to allow the patients that we serve get the equipment and the care that they deserve. Without that increase, it's only a matter of time before the hospital's own cash reserves are depleted.

In negotiating with an HMO, the hospital can bargain to receive higher payments; with federal or state insurance, the hospital has to take what is offered. Congress should do its best to make sure that the payment it offers is a fair one.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM B. RUGER, SR.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, one of New Hampshire's leading citizens, William B. Ruger, Sr., Chairman Emeritus of Sturm, Ruger & Company died peacefully at home on Saturday, July 6, 2002.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Bill Ruger for several decades. He was one of America's great gun designers and a true American entrepreneur.

Not only was Bill a giant in the firearm industry, his other interests were noted nationally as well. His philanthropy was especially evident through charities in communities throughout New Hampshire, as well as the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, WY where he served as a member of the Board of Trustees for over 15 years. Also, his Western Art Collection is thought to be one of the finest in the country.

In 1999 he was honored by the Camp Fire Club of America, one of the most prestigious hunting and conservation organizations in the country. In awarding Bill their Medal of Honor, they appropriately said, "he embodies a natural sense of justice and a passion for exploration, not only in the traditional sense, but in a business sense as well. Through the various and substantial endowments he has created, he has established a way to train and educate

the youth of our country in the importance of personal responsibility, conservation, and truth."

New Hampshire, and especially the community of Croydon, has lost a great citizen, and he will be sorely missed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO NANCY LÓPEZ

• Mr. DOMENICI. Madam, President, I rise today to pay tribute to one of New Mexico's favorite daughters, Nancy López, who over the Fourth of July holiday concluded her full-time career on the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour.

Nancy has a remarkable history not only as a player, but as an inspirational role model, who overcame hardships like racial and gender bias, to reach remarkable heights as a golfer. She did so with an inner strength, natural talent and the sustaining guidance of her loving parents, Marina and Domingo. They scrimped and saved to help Nancy reach her potential, which culminated at the pinnacle of the professional golfing world.

Her father's love for golf helped Nancy tap her natural talent for the sport at the young age of 8. She soon excelled, winning the New Mexico Women's Amateur title at 12, followed by twice winning the USGA Junior Girls Championship.

Nancy successfully petitioned the New Mexico Activities Association to be allowed to play on the boy's team at the Robert H. Goddard High School in Roswell. She honed her talents as a player at Tulsa University and turned pro in 1977.

From the little girl who first swung a club with her father on Roswell's public course, Nancy embarked on a 25-year career that brought greater public attention to the LPGA. In her first full year as a professional, she won nine tournaments and grabbed another eight titles in 1979. In all, Nancy has won 48 titles on the LPGA Tour and has rightfully been identified as the key figure who helped popularize women's golf.

In 1987, she was inducted into the LPGA Hall of Fame, and in 1992, I was privileged to personally congratulate

her as she received the prestigious Flo Hyman Award from the Women's Sports Foundation for "exemplifying dignity, spirit and commitment to excellence."

I think it is only fitting that a school in her old stomping grounds has been renamed, through the efforts of the Roswell Hispano Chamber of Commerce, the Nancy López Elementary School. This tribute serves as one reminder of the enduring pride the people of Roswell and New Mexico have for Nancy. As she makes the transition from the LPGA tour to devote more time to her family and charitable endeavors, I believe it is proper to honor and congratulate Nancy López.

I fully expect Nancy will continue to serve as a model for Hispanic youth, female athletes, and parents striving to provide a nurturing and loving environment for their children.●

U.C. DAVIS CANCER CENTER NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE DESIGNATION

• Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I am pleased to note that the University of California, Davis Cancer Center has achieved National Cancer Institute, NCI, designation. With this designation, the UC Davis Cancer Center becomes one of only nine centers in California.

The NCI designation is most prestigious, awarded to cancer institutions that have significantly contributed innovative cancer research to the scientific community. Furthermore, this notable distinction provides ongoing Federal support for research in the fight against this disease.

The center is a collaboration of over 200 scientists, working at the UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento, the main UC campus in Davis, and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

The partnership with Lawrence Livermore, the first of its kind in the Nation, was a major factor in winning the NCI designation. Physicians and scientists work together to use technology developed for the defense industry and other non-medical uses to advance cancer diagnosis and treatment.

In addition to hundreds of cancer studies underway at the cancer center,